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STUDENT VOLUNTEER MOVEMENT
FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS

ARE MORE FOREIGN MISSIONARIES NEEDED?

BY SAMUEL M. ZWEMER



Are More Foreign Missionaries Needed?

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

By reason of his experience as a missionary, having labored in Arabia for sixteen years, and his knowledge of the work among students, having served as a Secretary of the Student Volunteer Movement for more than five years, Dr. Zwemer is peculiarly well qualified to discuss the question, "Are more foreign missionaries needed?" As a member of Commission I of the World Missionary Conference he devoted much time to the study of the problem of carrying the Gospel to all the world, giving special attention to the unoccupied fields. In this paper he states briefly the reasons for his conviction that a much larger force of missionaries must be sent to the mission field if the Church is to do her duty to the unevangelized world.

FENNELL P. TURNER,
General Secretary.

"Move to the fore.

**Say not another is fitter than thou,
Shame to thy shrinking, up, face thy task now.
Own thyself equal to all a soul may.
Cease thy evading, God needs thee today.
Move to the fore.**

"Move to the fore.

**God Himself waits and must wait till thou come ;
Men are God's prophets though ages lie dumb ;
Halts the Christ-kingdom with conquest so near,
Thou art the cause then, thou soul in the rear,
Move to the fore."**

ARE MORE FOREIGN MISSIONARIES NEEDED?

The present demand for missionaries is unprecedented in acuteness and urgency. What seems a truism when the law of supply and demand is concerned is often called in question in regard to the need of more missionaries by those who do not take into consideration all the facts of the missionary enterprise before which the Church to-day stands. The following reasons seem to the writer to be conclusive:

1. More missionaries are needed to fill the places of those noble men and women who each year die at their posts or who are obliged to give up their work because of ill health or advanced age. No small number is needed each year to fill such vacancies. In some countries the death rate is enormous. As those on the firing line fall, their places must be filled by recruits. Our battle line cannot be allowed to waver or fall back because of lack of reënforcements if the

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world is to be evangelized. Just as surely as property needs repair, or buildings lost by fire or disaster need to be replaced, so surely are we obliged to fill up the places made vacant on the mission field.

2. More missionaries are needed if the present missionary staff is to be sufficiently increased to prevent the break-downs and the deaths of the missionaries already on the field. The very success which has attended the labors of the present force makes an increase in the staff necessary. The work on the mission field is expanding rapidly. The mission staff which to-day is equal to its task will to-morrow be overburdened. Furthermore, it is well known that most of the break-downs in health of older missionaries are occasioned not so much by climate or environment as by the terrific pressure of the unfinished task and the tremendous opportunities which the workers see on every hand.

3. More missionaries are needed because of the tremendous expansion of the work which has been carried on now for a series of years, in some cases for decades, at 35,000 mission stations on

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the foreign field. One or two missionaries are sufficient to spy out the land or do the work of the pioneer. But within a few years their stations will call for many more workers as preachers, teachers, physicians and nurses if the work of the pioneers is to be conserved, if the Church is to be organized and developed, if workers are to be trained and if the demands of a growing Christian community are to be adequately met. One Livingstone could call attention to Central Africa; it requires hundreds of missionaries to meet the opportunities created by his life and death. Uganda and Blantyre alone need scores of workers for the industrial, educational and evangelistic development that has taken place at these centres.

4. More missionaries are needed because of conditions created by the remarkable successes of missions already established. The revivals in China and in Korea, the mass movements towards Christianity in India, the intellectual unrest in Egypt, the political upheavals in Persia and Turkey—each in its own way is a distinct call for more workers.

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5. Conditions in mission countries made known and laid upon the consciences of the Christian Church, forces Christendom to a realization as never before of the need of more missionaries.

The fact that the appalling needs of the non-Christian world and the social horrors of heathenism and Islam are no longer veiled by ignorance or provincialism, but have become an open secret through a flood of missionary literature and the daily press of Christian lands, is in itself a distinct call for more missionaries. The Church is no longer unaware of these appalling needs, and must therefore meet them or be untrue to her trust.

(a) The physical sufferings of the non-Christian world must be relieved and medical missionaries are now urgently needed for fields where no medical missionary work was possible twenty years ago.

(b) The intellectual awakening among the masses in Eastern and Western Asia is such a call for teachers as there has not been since the coming of the Great Teacher Himself. His command to "go and *teach* all nations" can now be

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literally fulfilled. An illiterate Christianity is a contradiction of terms. We must establish day schools and colleges to make the new Christianity permanent and potent.

(c) The great social evils of the non-Christian world can only be eradicated by social settlement, and the only social settlement that can help uplift the non-Christian world is the mission station.

(d) The spiritual unrest and longing occasioned by the disintegration of the old religions and philosophies call for an increase in the number of missionaries if these people are to have an adequate opportunity to know the religion of Jesus Christ. What we do for these people must be done now. They are groping in the dark. Many of them are going towards the light, and unless we show the way to the Father's house and the Father's heart, they will not find the way home. Tens of thousands are losing their faith in the religion of their forefathers and are drifting into agnosticism or atheism, and unless we win them for Christ, their latter state will be worse than their first. The spiritual unrest of

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the non-Christian world makes this the time of times to send out those who can tell them of the great Rest-giver.

(e) Not only because of the old religions and philosophies, but also because of the renewed activities of non-Christian religions and philosophies in non-Christian countries. The inroads which Christianity is making in many countries have led to a revival of non-Christian systems. In Japan the Buddhists have adopted the methods of the Christian Church. In India there is an active propaganda on the part of the Mohammedans, Hindus, etc.

6. More missionaries are needed if an adequate force of workers is ever to be sent to the countries which the Church ordinarily thinks of as being adequately occupied.

The reasons given above show in the abstract that there is a great need for more missionaries everywhere, and what is true in the abstract and in general, stands out more urgently when we consider those countries which many of us think of as adequately occupied by Christian forces.

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(a) Japan has sometimes been considered as a mission field where the foreign missionary could be dispensed with. That this is not the case is evident from the recent testimony of missionaries. One of them writes: "In every place the spiritual fields are white already to harvest, and there has never before been such a wealth of opportunity to spread the gospel. In every one of our districts the permanent residence of a foreign missionary would be welcomed, and the Christians would be greatly encouraged and strengthened by his presence, not to mention the evangelists. Whatever cause there may have been in the past for hesitation about strengthening the evangelistic work because of doubt about the attitude of the Japanese towards foreigners is now dispelled, and to-day all places are open and we are sure of a welcome everywhere. Now is the time for whole-hearted effort to meet the demands."

(b) From Mexico one of the missionaries writes that "the people are crying bitterly because they are deprived of the opportunities for Christian education. Letters come in continu-

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ally begging for books and workers. 'We are brutes, and our people must be left to be brutes. They have taken away our one hope in shutting up the schools,' said one native Mexican."

(c) The doors of eighteen provinces of China are wide open. There are now in the Empire 4,175 missionaries, 2,027 Chinese church organizations, and 177,724 Protestant church members. But what are these in a population of over 400,000,000? The unfinished task in China is still gigantic, and the unreached populations can only be estimated in millions. There are in China 1,557 cities without missionaries. Where is there a greater call for city missionaries? And we must not forget the villages and the vast multitudes of people living in the country districts. The appeal from these is no less appalling. The intellectual awakening is such that a vast army of Christian teachers is needed, and needed immediately. And not only is there a call for medical men who will go out and minister to the physical needs of the people, but immediately there should be established in strategic centres in China thoroughly equipped medical schools in

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order to bring into existence the medical profession for the Chinese people.

(d) The success of Christian missions in Korea constitutes one of the marvels of modern Church history. Christianity has secured a foothold in greater or less degree in almost every county in the country. The growth of the Christian Church has been wonderful. The Church membership, however, is but a small percentage of the 12,000,000 population. Those who know the situation best say that the present missionary force should be doubled if the present results are to be conserved.

(e) India is one of the most widely known mission fields, yet in the central provinces there are vast regions, almost wholly unoccupied, awaiting pioneer effort. In Baghelkhand, with an area of 14,323 square miles and a population of 1,555,024, there is no mission work whatever. In Bundelkhand, with an area of 9,851 square miles and a population of 1,308,326, there are eight native States, only one of which has a mission station. In Gwalior Residency, with a population of 2,069,421, there is only a single mission

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station, while in the Bhopal Agency, with a population of 1,267,526, there are only two places where missionary work is carried on. These are illustrations of conditions which prevail in other parts of India. The unfinished task in that great Empire is calling for a large multiplication in the number of workers.

7. More missionaries are needed if the unoccupied mission fields are ever to be occupied.

(a) In South America, Central Brazil with its large Indian population, French Guiana without a Protestant missionary and Northern Patagonia are utterly neglected.

(b) In the island world, Socotra, once Christian but now wholly Moslem; Southern Sumatra, still pagan but in danger of becoming Mohammedan, and the 400,000 Mohammedans of the Philippines, are some of the fields wholly unoccupied, awaiting pioneer effort.

(c) In Asia, the following countries are practically without mission stations: Afghanistan, Anam, Western and Southern Arabia, Bokhara, Chinese Turkestan, Russian Turkestan, Khiva,

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Nepal, Siberia and Tibet. These lands represent a total population of no less than 37,000,000.

(d) Africa is still calling for light-bearers to bring the torch of divine Truth and a Christian civilization. More missionaries are needed to explore and occupy for Christ the following countries: Baghirmi, Bornu, Dar-fur, Fezzan, the Ivory Coast, Portuguese Guinea, Rio de Oro, Senegal, Senegambia, Sokoto, British and Italian Somaliland and Wadai. The moral and social conditions that prevail in these lands, the almost universal illiteracy and the possibility of entering them, all unite in a plea that should be irresistible for pioneer missionaries to lay the foundations of the Christian Church that is to be. If we could but realize for a single hour the every-day conditions of Mohammedan womanhood or pagan childhood in darkest Africa, the vision itself would voice the need.

The appeal of the unoccupied fields is an appeal to hasten the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. "This gospel of the kingdom must first be preached in all the world for a witness, and then shall the end come." Some of these unoccu-

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pied fields have been neglected for centuries, and some of them are the most difficult fields in the world. The hardest tasks have been left to the last.

Sudden, before my inward, open vision,
Millions of faces crowded up to view,
Sad eyes that said: "For us is no provision;
Give us your Savior, too!"

Sorrowful women's faces, hungry, yearning,
Wild with despair, or dark with sin and dread,
Worn with long weeping for the unreturning,
Hopeless, un comforted.

"Give us!" they cry, "Your cup of consolation
Never to our outstretching hands is passed,
We long for the Desire of every nation,
And oh, we die so fast!"

8. Not only is there a need for more missionaries but the demand—the absolute requirement—is for missionaries of the highest qualifications. They must be men and women not only of best intellectual training but of superb spiritual qualities. They go to represent our Lord Jesus Christ. They must reproduce Him in their daily walk and life. The present crisis and opportunity in the occupied fields and the peculiar difficulties

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that remain to challenge our faith and devotion in the unoccupied fields of the world unite in a demand for the highest qualifications in the missionaries appointed. The need is qualitative as well as quantitative. "Let us pray," said Dr. Warneck in his letter to the Student Volunteer Convention at Liverpool, "not merely for more missionaries, but above all for suitable missionaries—men mature enough to face the increased tasks. We need in the mission field men and women who possess Christian characters, firmly grounded in the faith, established in love, exemplary in their life, and tried in patience, as well as fitted with natural gifts and sterling education, authorities by dint of spiritual superiority and educators by dint of pedagogic wisdom." The men who go out to lead the Church in Korea, Japan, China and India must be men of sterling character, great initiative and with spiritual power of leadership. A pastor in one of the native churches in China recently sent an appeal to a Mission Board for additional workers, in these words: "The land of China is extensive, and its people are many, and to-day is the day of war-

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fare between Christ and Satan for the prize of this great empire. Therefore, if your Excellencies are truly in earnest in the desire that Christ may sing aloud the song of victory here, we, the little children who have already received your favor, open our mouths widely and beseech you to increase the number of *generals*. Of these, the more sent the better, and the more speedily, the better. This is the desire of my heart." What the pastor of the church at Poa-a expressed so vividly is also urged by Mr. Robert E. Speer. "The day is passing," he says, "if it is not already long past, when missionaries can stand any more on the strength of their racial superiority, or on the strength of their administrative control of the funds of the home churches. They have got to stand now on their moral superiority, on their intellectual superiority, on their spiritual superiority, on their superiority as men, or they have no superiority on which to stand." The demand is for the very best the Church can produce.

This united demand for missionaries of the highest qualities—spiritual and intellectual—and

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in greatly increased numbers which comes up from the vast fields "white already unto the harvest," can only be met by the offer of life service on the part of men and women in our colleges and universities. The character of the work to be done limits the field for possible recruits for this world-wide conquest.

Ion Keith-Falconer closed one of his addresses to the students of Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities with a sentence which, in the light of the facts set forth in the preceding pages, is even a stronger appeal to the students of to-day:

"While vast continents are shrouded in almost utter darkness, and hundreds of millions suffer the horrors of heathenism and of Islam, the burden of proof rests on you to show that the circumstances in which God has placed you were meant by God to keep you out of the foreign field."

Copies of this pamphlet may be ordered from the Student Volunteer Movement, 125 East 27th Street, New York City, at 5c. each, 40c. per dozen, \$2.50 per hundred, express charges prepaid.

